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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 CONAKRY 000662

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [ASEC](#) [GV](#)  
SUBJECT: PIVI AND HIS DRUNKEN GANG - BANDITS FOR HIRE

REF: CONAKRY 0290

Classified By: POL/ECON CHIEF SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

11. (S) SUMMARY. According to a civilian living at Camp Alpha Yaya, Pivi is perpetually drunk, intimidating, and still popular among many of the rank and file soldiers. Contact said that Pivi is closely connected to Ousmane Conte, the president's son, and routinely receives cash from him, which he in turn distributes around the camp to buy loyalty. Contact speculated that Pivi may be heading up a gang of petty criminals, or at least condoning their activities. He also spoke of corruption, a complete lack of discipline, and general debauchery among the soldiers at Camp Alpha Yaya. END SUMMARY.

12. (S) On October 31, Poloff met with Yaya Diallo, a young marketing professor and frequent visitor to the Embassy's information resource center. A civilian, Diallo has lived in Camp Alpha Yaya for the past eight years with his brother, who is an enlisted soldier. He claims to have many friends among young rank and file soldiers at Camp Alpha Yaya. Poloff initially met with Diallo after the May military mutiny (reftel).

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THE DRUNKEN REVELER  
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13. (S) Diallo spoke at length about mutiny leader Claude Pivi (aka Coplan), who continues to draw significant support from young rank and file soldiers. According to Diallo, Pivi is perpetually drunk and is rarely seen without a beer in his hand, or alcohol stashed somewhere in his vehicle. Diallo said that Pivi spends most evenings drinking with his mistress and hanging out at a bar called "Esperanza," which is located just outside the military camp. He added that Pivi usually does not come back to the camp until the early hours of the morning, and that many people hear him coming back because he is so loud.

14. (S) Citing an example, Diallo said that during Ramadan, Pivi came into the camp after midnight with his vehicle's radio blasting music. Pivi reportedly got out of the vehicle, obviously drunk, and started dancing and joking around. Diallo said many of the Muslim occupants of the camp were deeply offended by Pivi's insensitive behavior during the holy month.

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CONDONING BANDITRY?  
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15. (S) Although he did not have concrete proof, Diallo speculated that Pivi and his gang have been orchestrating a number of armed robberies throughout the city. He mentioned that Pivi entered the camp with his car full of electronics

and other items, just a few days after a local business had been robbed at gunpoint. Diallo said that he did not think Pivi himself participated in the robbery, but that some of Pivi's supporters most likely did. He mentioned a similar case where armed soldiers recently robbed a money exchanger working outside the airport, reportedly stealing more than 40 million GnF. Diallo was certain that these crimes and others like them had been committed by soldiers at Camp Alpha Yaya.

16. (S) Diallo noted that Pivi continues to maintain a high public profile, driving around in a convoy of three SUVs, one of which was given to him by the president, and another that he stole from General Baillo Diallo (the former minister of defense). Diallo added that Pivi's convoy is always full of armed soldiers.

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THREATS OF MORE TO COME  
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17. (S) According to Diallo, Pivi plans to "create more problems" soon, possibly as early as November 1. Diallo said that Pivi has been bragging to the soldiers that he is going to make sure that the bonus they negotiated for during the mutiny, for which the GoG made the last payment in October, becomes a permanent addition to basic salaries. Diallo added that Pivi has repeatedly said that he has no interest in becoming president himself, but that he would not hesitate to support his "favored" candidate if the opportunity arises. Diallo indicated that Pivi could be bought and it was not clear who his favorite candidate might be.

CONAKRY 00000662 002 OF 003

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OUSMANE'S MAN  
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18. (S) However, Diallo said that Pivi is closely connected to Ousmane Conte, the president's eldest son and notorious drug kingpin. He added that everyone is scared of Pivi, who is apparently a rather intimidating personality. Diallo noted that Pivi seems to have an almost limitless supply of cash, while many other young soldiers have recently purchased motorcycles, vehicles, and other high ticket items that they could not possibly afford on their stated salaries. Diallo said that the money is coming directly from Ousmane Conte and narco-trafficking. Pivi has reportedly been generous in distributing the cash he has been receiving. Diallo said that Pivi often "struts" around the camp, passing out money to soldiers and civilians alike. He also noted that one of Ousmane's closest deputies was suddenly transferred to Camp Alpha Yaya after the May military mutiny, and now works very closely with Pivi.

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CORRUPTION, DEBAUCHERY, AND TOTAL DISORDER  
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19. (S) According to Diallo, Camp Alpha Yaya operates in an environment of corruption, general debauchery, and an almost complete lack of discipline. He said that he had personally seen a new recruit threaten an officer by holding him up by the collar of his uniform. On the corruption side, Diallo said that camp inhabitants, himself included, frequently see soldiers fuel up large military trucks at the camp's fuel depot and then drive the trucks to just outside the camp where the soldiers siphon off the fuel and sell it to the local roadside vendors. In addition, Diallo said that it was common knowledge when the military was doing its last recruitment campaign, that the price of a place on the recruitment list was 1.5 million GnF (\$312). He added that he had many friends who had purchased spots. With respect to debauchery, Diallo said that soldiers routinely drink alcohol to the point of drunkenness, smoke marijuana, and solicit the young prostitutes who start circulating in the camp as early

as 8:00 in the evening.

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STILL POPULAR  
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¶10. (S) When asked about Pivi's level of support, Diallo said that Pivi is still very popular, but only within Camp Alpha Yaya. He noted that there is an underlying animosity between Camp Alpha Yaya and Camp Samory Toure, related to the unexplained assassination of a military officer (Pamival) in ¶2000. Diallo said that soldiers from the Forest Region represent Pivi's largest support group, but that he also has people from other ethnic groups behind him. At the same time, Diallo said that ethnocentrism is emerging in the camp, with groups of Peuhls and Malinkes that generally deal only with persons of their same ethnic group. He said that the Soussous intermingle with all the groups.

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LINKS TO THE PRESIDENCY?  
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¶11. (S) Poloff asked whether Diallo knew of any links between Pivi and current political leaders, specifically mentioning former Finance Minister Kassory Fofana, Prime Minister Souare, and Minister Secretary General of the Presidency Alpha Ibrahima Keira. Diallo said he was certain that Keira is talking to Pivi and likely working together. He pointed out that Pivi has visited Keira at the presidential palace several times since the mutiny. Diallo added that the minister of defense has also been consulting with Pivi. He noted that the Presidency generally seems to be threatened by Pivi, but that certain individuals such as Keira may not be averse to using Pivi to attain their own objectives.

¶12. (S) In conclusion, Diallo said that "Pivi is absolutely crazy; he can kill anyone, anytime." He then added "Pivi still has a short future in Guinea, but there is not too much left." Diallo said that the local population is completely disgusted with Pivi in particular and the military in general.

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COMMENT  
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CONAKRY 00000662 003 OF 003

¶13. (S) Diallo is a new contact and this meeting was only the second time that Poloff had met with him. His motivations in sharing information are unclear. The accuracy of his observations is also unclear, but many of his comments are consistent with information gathered from other sources. Embassy has been receiving information that suggests that Pivi is working with Ousmane Conte and that he may be threatening another mutiny. However, if the GoG instates a salary increase on November 1, as sensitive reporting indicates, Pivi will likely back down from his mutinous threats. Diallo's comments suggest that Pivi and his bandits are for hire to the highest bidder, and for now, Ousmane Conte is reportedly sending a lot of money his way. END  
COMMENT.  
RASPOLIC